

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Presently Amended) An isolated DNA encoding a protein which comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2, and confers to a ~~*Corynebacterium glutamineum*~~ *Corynebacterium glutamicum* microorganism an ability to grow in a medium containing 1 % polypeptone, 0.5 % yeast extract, 0.5 % sodium chloride, 0.1 % glucose, 20 µg/ml thiamine and 100 µg/ml lysozyme.

2. (Canceled).

3. (Presently Amended) An isolated DNA comprising the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1; or a DNA hybridizing with the DNA having a complementary nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 at 65 °C in the presence of 0.7 to 1.0 M sodium chloride and encoding a protein which confers to a ~~*Corynebacterium glutamineum*~~ *Corynebacterium glutamicum* microorganism an ability to grow in a medium containing 1 % polypeptone, 0.5% yeast extract. 0.5 % sodium chloride, 0.1% glucose, 20 µg/ml thiamine and 100 µg/ml lysozyme, wherein the hybridization further includes a step of washing under the condition of 65 °C by the use of solution containing 15 to 300 mM sodium chloride and 1.5 to 30 mM sodium citrate.

4. (Presently Amended) An isolated DNA which is contained in a plasmid carried by FERM BP-6479 and codes for a protein which confers to a ~~*Corynebacterium glutamineum*~~ *Corynebacterium glutamicum* microorganism an ability to grow in a medium containing 1 % polypeptone, 0.5 % yeast extract, 0.5 % sodium chloride, 0.1 % glucose, 20 µg/ml thiamine and 100 µg/ml lysozyme.

5-9. (Canceled).

10. (Withdrawn) A protein which comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2, or a protein which comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 where one or

more amino acids are deleted, substituted, or added and which has an activity of giving a lysozyme insensitivity to a lysozyme-sensitive microorganism belonging to *Corynebacterium glutamicum*.

11. (Withdrawn) A protein which comprises an amino acid sequence having 60% or more homology to the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 and which has an activity of giving a lysozyme insensitivity to a lysozyme-sensitive microorganism belonging to *Corynebacterium glutatnicum*.

12. (Withdrawn) The protein according to claim 10, wherein the protein which has an activity of giving a lysozyme insensitivity to a lysozyme-sensitive microorganism belonging to *Corynebacterium glutamicum* is a protein having an activity of giving an insensitivity to 100 µg/ml lysozyme to a mutant belonging to *Corynebacterium glutamicum* and having a sensitivity to not more than 50 µg/ml lysozyme.

13. (Canceled).

14. (Withdrawn) A method for the preparation of a bacterium having a lysozyme sensitivity, which comprises inactivating the activity of a protein which comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2, or a protein which comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 where one or more amino acids are deleted, substituted, or added and which has an activity of giving a lysozyme insensitivity to a lysozyme-sensitive microorganism belonging to *Corynebacterium glutamicum*.

15. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 14, wherein a mutation is introduced into a chromosomal gene coding for the protein which comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2, or a protein which comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 where one or more amino acids are deleted, substituted, or added and which has an activity of giving a lysozyme insensitivity to a lysozyme-sensitive microorganism belonging to *Corynebacterium glutamicum*.

16. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 14, wherein the bacterium is a microorganism belonging to the genus *Corynebacterium*.

17. (Withdrawn) A bacterium obtainable by the method of claim 14.

18. (Withdrawn) A method for producing an amino acid, which comprises culturing the bacterium of claim 17 in a medium, producing and accumulating an amino acid in the culture, and collecting the amino acid from the culture.

19. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 18, wherein the amino acid is glutamic acid or glutamine.

20. (Previously Amended) The DNA according to claim 1, wherein the microorganism is a mutant strain of *Corynebacterium glutamicum* which cannot grow in a medium containing 1 % polypeptone, 0.5 % yeast extract, 0.5 % sodium chloride, 0.1 % glucose, 20 µg/ml thiamine and 100 µg/ml lysozyme.

21. (Canceled).

22. (Previously Amended) The DNA according to claim 3, wherein the microorganism is a mutant strain of *Corynebacterium glutamicum* which cannot grow in a medium containing 1 % polypeptone, 0.5 % yeast extract, 0.5 % sodium chloride, 0.1 % glucose, 20 µg/ml thiamine and 50 µg/ml lysozyme prior to transformation with said DNA.

23. (Previously Amended) The DNA according to claim 4, wherein the microorganism is a mutant strain of *Corynebacterium glutamicum* that cannot grow in a medium containing 1 % polypeptone, 0.5 % yeast extract, 0.5 % sodium chloride, 0.1 % glucose, 20 µg/ml thiamine and 50 µg/ml lysozyme prior to transformation with said DNA.

24. (Previously Presented) The DNA according to claim 1, wherein the DNA is a DNA derived from a microorganism belonging to the genus *Corynebacterium*.

25. (Canceled).

26. (Previously Presented) The DNA according to claim 3, wherein the DNA is a DNA derived from a microorganism belonging to the genus *Corynebacterium*.

27. (Previously Presented) The DNA according to claim 4, wherein the DNA is a DNA derived from a microorganism belonging to the genus *Corynebacterium*.

28. (Previously Presented) The DNA according to claim 1, wherein the DNA is a DNA derived from a microorganism belonging to *Corynebacterium glutamicum*.

29. (Canceled).

30. (Previously Presented) The DNA according to claim 3, wherein the DNA is a DNA derived from a microorganism belonging to *Corynebacterium glutamicum*.

31. (Previously Presented) The DNA according to claim 4, wherein the DNA is a DNA derived from a microorganism belonging to *Corynebacterium glutamicum*.

32. (Previously Presented) A recombinant vector comprising the DNA according to any one of claims 1, 20, 24, and 28.

33. (Canceled).

34. (Previously Presented) A recombinant vector comprising the DNA according to any one of claims 3, 22, 26, and 30.

35. (Previously Presented) A recombinant vector comprising the DNA according to any one of claims 4, 23, 27, and 31.

36. (Previously Presented) A transformant prepared by introducing the recombinant vector of claim 32 into a host cell.

37. (Canceled).

38. (Previously Presented) A transformant prepared by introducing the recombinant vector of claim 34 into a host cell.

39. (Previously Presented) A transformant prepared by introducing the recombinant vector of claim 35 into a host cell.

40. (Previously Presented) A method for producing a protein, which comprises culturing in a medium a transformant prepared by introducing a recombinant vector comprising DNA according to any one of claims 1, 20, 24 and 28 into a host cell, producing

and accumulating the protein encoded by the DNA in the culture, and collecting the protein from the culture.

41-43. (Canceled).

44. (Previously Presented) A method for producing a protein, which comprises culturing in a medium a transformant prepared by introducing a recombinant vector comprising DNA according to any one of claims 3, 22, 26 and 30 into a host cell, producing and accumulating the protein encoded by the DNA in the culture, and collecting the protein from the culture.

45. (Previously Presented) A method for producing a protein, which comprises culturing in a medium a transformant prepared by introducing a recombinant vector comprising DNA according to any one of claims 4, 23, 27 and 31 into a host cell, producing and accumulating the protein encoded by the DNA in the culture, and collecting the protein from the culture.

46. (Previously Amended) A DNA fragment which comprises a nucleotide sequence of the nucleotide position numbers 271 to 1593 in the nucleotide sequence identified as SEQ ID NO: 1.

47. (Previously Presented) A recombinant vector comprising the DNA according to claim 46.

48. (Previously Presented) A transformant prepared by introducing the recombinant vector of claim 47 into a host cell.

49. (Previously Presented) A method for producing a protein, which comprises culturing in a medium a transformant prepared by introducing a recombinant vector comprising DNA according to claim 46 into a host cell, producing and accumulating the protein encoded by the DNA in the culture, and collecting the protein from the culture.